

# Christian Community

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## Keeping Up With The Commission

The members and staff of the Commission have been busy about many things during the past weeks. On February 22 and 23, some sixty school administrators, classroom teachers, and leaders from Evangelical and Reformed and Congregational Christian churches in the state met at Mansfield, Ohio, for a Conference on Religion and Public Education. Chaired by Robert D. Smink, chairman of the Commission's committee on religion and public education, and with the excellent leadership of Dr. F. Ernest Johnson, professor emeritus of Teachers College, Columbia University, and Professor Gerald Read of Kent State University, the problems of dealing effectively with religion in the classroom and of cooperation between church and school were frankly and understandingly considered.

The following week twenty Evangelical and Reformed and 35 Congregational Christian representatives participated in the annual interdenominational Churchmen's Washington Seminar. Three members of the Commission, Mrs. William D. Powell, the Reverend Theodore A. Braun, and the Reverend Alfred Schroeder, were among the delegates who came from as far away as Oregon. Dr. Ray Gibbons, director of the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches, was general chairman of the seminar.

A Christian Social Action Institute at Franklinton Center, Bricks, North Carolina, sponsored jointly by the social action committees of the Southern Synod (E&R) and the Southern Convention (CC) on March 4 and 5 brought together 30 representatives of the two groups. Among the leaders were Professor Waldo Beach of Duke University Divinity School, Dean Frank T. Wilson of Howard University, and members of the Commission and Council staffs. Chaplain Aitken of the Keeley Institute, Greensboro, conducted a helpful discussion of alcohol education.

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## NATIONAL ISSUES CALL FOR CHRISTIAN ACTION

At least four major issues of immediate importance, plus a number of significant long-range problems, are under consideration in Washington at the present time, according to responsible observers at the national capital. Some of these could conceivably be acted upon before this issue of CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY reaches its readers. Since others, however, are in danger of dying unless individuals, churches, synods, and public interest groups take action, we present a brief run-down on the issues.

### 1. Fair Labor Standards

Hearings have been scheduled in both houses of Congress on bills which would extend to some 9,600,000 workers now excluded the minimum wage and maximum hour protection of the Fair Labor Standards Act. S. 1267, introduced by Senator Wayne Morse, would cover agricultural and migratory workers if their employer has hired in any quarter of the previous four quarters a number

of workers which would add up to 400 man-days in the quarter. This would bring "factory farms" under the law but would exclude most family farms. Small employers, in retail, service, dry-cleaning, and laundering industries are not affected because those having an annual business of \$500,000 or less are exempted.

This bill is to be distinguished from the proposals of the Administration offered by Secretary of Labor Mitchell, which would cover employees of enterprises doing business across state lines to the extent of one million dollars or more and employing 100 or more workers. Such employees would receive the federal minimum wage but would not be covered by the hour provisions granting time-and-a-half pay for more than 40 hours per week. The Administration proposals do not cover agricultural workers, and would altogether affect only 2,500,000 wage and salary workers, most of whom

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## Philadelphia Church Organizes For Action

St. Stephen's Church, Philadelphia, the Reverend Carl T. Smith, pastor, is a mission congregation which has taken seriously the goal of community service and social action set forth in the denominational Program of Advance.

Early last year, St. Stephen's organized a committee on Christian social action, with five members and an interested pastor. With the help of the synodical committee on Christian social action, each of the five members chose a particular field on which to become the committee "expert"—race relations, international affairs, juvenile delinquency, health and welfare, and politics. Subsequently two additional members were added and made labor relations their field of study.

Thus the *Philadelphia Synod News* describes its beginnings:

"As one of its first projects the Committee decided to look into the problems of mental retardation and to attempt to discover whether there was something that they could do in this field. After a thorough study and investigation which included much advice and help from the Philadelphia Chapter of the Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children as well as the Philadelphia Commission on the Mentally Retarded, the Committee gained the approval of the Consistory of St. Stephen's to organize a recreational period in the church social hall one afternoon each week for the mentally retarded children of the community. Mothers of the children attended with the children and organized games for them. The Committee

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are already receiving the current federal minimum of one dollar per hour.

In a separate bill (H.R. 299), Representative Thomas J. Lane has proposed amending the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to establish the minimum hourly wage at \$1.25.

Letters regarding the Senate amendments may be addressed to the Senate Subcommittee on Labor Standards, Senate Office Building, Washington 25, D. C. Members are Senators John F. Kennedy (D., Mass.), chairman; Matthew M. Neely (D., W. Va.), Patrick V. McNamara (D., Mich.), Wayne Morse (D., Ore.), Irving M. Ives (R., N. Y.), Barry M. Goldwater (R., Ariz.), William A. Purtell (R., Conn.).

### 2. Public School Construction

An issue that comes close to home to most American communities is the overcrowding of classrooms and the acute need for new school facilities. The United States Office of Education has estimated that the current school enrollment exceeds the normal capacity of the nation's schools by 2.3 million children; and that at the beginning of the present school year we needed 159,000 additional classrooms to correct overcrowding and to replace unsatisfactory, obsolete, and dangerous facilities. The net annual increase in enrollment averages  $1\frac{3}{4}$  million pupils, calling for 45,000 new classrooms in addition to the replacement of obsolescent facilities. Groups, such as the United States Chamber of Commerce, which have challenged these figures fail to take account of the fact that we began the post-war period with a shortage rising out of depression and wartime building problems, and that many school systems are using buildings that should have been replaced long ago.

A number of bills have been introduced. The Administration recommendations, embodied in H.R. 3976 and 3986, call for a federal expenditure of \$325 million per year for four years, to be allocated on the basis of the relative income status of the states, and requires the states to match the federal funds. H.R. 1, introduced by Congressman Augustine B. Kelley (D., Pa.) would authorize \$600 million per year for the next six years, and would make states eligible on the basis of their total school-age population. The Administration program embodies one feature which the Kelley bill lacks; namely, a provision for

grants to encourage states to set up programs to encourage school construction. It is not impossible that the final bill which will be reported by the House Committee on Education and Labor (Rep. Graham A. Barden, D., N. C., chairman), will incorporate some features of these and other proposals.

It should, however, be remembered that many public school officials consider even the Kelley bill insufficient to meet the emergency. Yet unless citizens and church groups insist upon the importance of making better provision for the schooling of all our youth, the nation will pay far more than the relatively small cost of school buildings.

### 3. Immigration and Refugees

The tragic events in Hungary have made our people conscious of the necessity of providing for a larger number of refugees from that country. President Eisenhower's request for authorization to admit escapees in such emergencies and to permit aliens paroled into the United States to stay here should command wide support.

There are, however, other refugees who have been seeking a home; and there are people in areas such as Holland, Greece, and Italy who need to emigrate because of the pressure of the population on the economy. The over-all problem will not be touched unless some basic changes in the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 are adopted. On some of these our General Synod and other church bodies have spoken before (cf. *Our Social Witness*, p. 26f.).

Congressmen Hillings and Keating in H.R. 4202 and H.R. 4205 have incorporated the President's general immigration recommendations: to base national quotas on 1950 census rather than 1920; to distribute the additional numbers among countries in proportion to their actual immigration into the United States since 1924; to pool unused quota numbers and distribute them without regard to country of birth within the geographical area represented; and to grant relief from exclusion or expulsion in hardship cases. The companion Senate bill is S. 1006, introduced by Senator Arthur V. Watkins.

A more fundamental revision (H.R. 3364) has been proposed by Representative Emanuel Celler and 27 other House Democrats. This bill would establish an over-all annual quota of 250,000, with visas apportioned not on the basis of nationality but among five categories — family unification, occupa-

tion, refugee asylum, national interest, and resettlement.

No hearings have been scheduled by either the Senate Committee on the Judiciary (James O. Eastland, chairman), or the House Committee on the Judiciary (Emanuel Celler, chairman).

### 4. Foreign Economic Policy

It is unnecessary to review here the cogent arguments for a large-scale, long-range, wise program of economic assistance to underdeveloped and advancing countries. Our own denomination as well as most interdenominational councils and conferences have made this point again and again. (See the Commission's statement and the General Synod action on "Our Nation's Responsibility to God" and on "Technical Assistance and Economic Development" in *Christian Social Action at the General Synod*.)

What is serious and alarming is that, despite general popular support, there is a tendency in Washington today to trim this program at precisely its most creative points and for basically wrong reasons. There are those in both parties who, regarding economic aid as merely a weapon in the cold war, would place even more emphasis on military aid, or aid bound up with political "strings" of the kind that defeat our own reasonable political goals. Such experience as we have had suggests that to spend effectively and wisely (*economically* in the best sense) large sums should be available for grants and loans over a long period of time; yet there is a deplorable reluctance to obligate funds beyond a year, even with the normal privileges of periodic review and evaluation.

Resolutions from national bodies are not enough. Individual church people across our land should write to the chairmen and members of the committees on foreign relations and on appropriations (see *Register Christian Opinion* for their names) as well as to their own Senators and Representatives to point out the elementary fact that we cannot have a stable and secure world unless we satisfy the "revolution of rising expectations" as well as outwit and outbid the Communists in the economic and political fields. The point should also be made that we commend our own interests best by treating the borrowing or receiving nations with respect, as equals capable of making up their own minds about economic philosophy and foreign policy. And we might well encourage a greater measure of support for United Nations technical assistance and economic development programs.

It was recently said that the whole



future of our overseas economic program may be determined by what we decide this year. This places a grave responsibility on Christian citizens to work in order that this decision may be a wise one.

### Other Questions

We can simply refer in passing to some of the other vital issues with which the nation is being confronted. A number of bills on civil rights have been introduced and deserve study. S. 83 (Senator Dirksen) and H.R. 1151 (Rep. Keating) embody President Eisenhower's recommendations for a bipartisan commission to investigate alleged violations and for the creation of a civil rights division in the Department of Justice. In the Senate Chairman Hennings of the Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights hopes to report an omnibus bill incorporating additional safeguards embodied in S. 426, 427, 428, and 429, along with the president's proposals. (See *Memo* for March 1, 1957 for details).

Several bills pertaining to Indian Health (H.R. 247), Indian Vocational Training (H.R. 567), Housing (H.R. 815), and relief for distressed areas (H.R. 2130) also merit attention.

### SOUTHERN CHURCHMEN TO MEET

The Fellowship of Southern Churchmen has joined with other church leaders in calling a Conference on Christian Faith and Human Relations, to meet in Nashville, Tennessee, April 23-25, 1957. Growing out of a conviction that the church has a ministry of reconciliation and a concern for the divisions and hostilities threatening the region, the conference will consider the responsibilities and opportunities of Christians in meeting this crisis.

Information concerning the conference may be secured by writing to the Reverend Howard Kester, Fellowship of Southern Churchmen, Black Mountain, North Carolina.

The 1957 edition of REGISTER CHRISTIAN OPINION, listing the members and committees of Congress, may now be ordered from the Commission office at 10 cents each, 15 for \$1.

A new edition of MEET THE COMMISSION ON CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ACTION, introducing our new members and officers, is available free on request for use in our churches.

## Philadelphia Church Organizes For Action

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also made it a point to get in touch with their political representatives in Washington to urge passage of legislation then in Congress for increased appropriations to support training of teachers specially qualified to work with the mentally retarded.

"Neighbors of St. Stephen's mentioned that the lack of adequate recreational facilities in a nearby city playground was encouraging young people of the area to find their recreation on street corners, in petty gambling, etc. The Christian Social Action Committee brought the situation to the attention of the Department of Recreation of the City of Philadelphia and received the courteous and willing cooperation of the Commissioner who investigated and advised what steps could be taken.

"The Committee corresponded and met with local political leaders and, through their Congressman in Washington, were put on the mailing list to receive each issue of the *Congressional Record* which is indexed by the Committee and kept on file in the church for use of the Congregation.

"By the beginning of the Fall Season, the Committee felt that it was well enough established to sponsor a series of forums open to the community on subjects of general Christian concern. At its first meeting in September, the Rev. Dr. Tibor Chikes, Pastor of Hungarian Evangelical and Reformed Church in Phoenixville and Chairman of our Synod Social Action Committee was invited to discuss the psychological and spiritual aspects of the immigration situation. In a question and answer period after his talk, Dr. Chikes and Mr. Robert W. Liddell, chairman of the Committee at St. Stephen's, explained some of the many features of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952 (the McCarran-Walter Act) which the Church feels are in need of change. St. Stephen's Committee also wrote to their Senators and Congressmen and members of appropriate committees in Washington urging these revisions.

"In October, just before the National elections, the Committee presented its second forum on 'Politics.' A Democratic State Senator and a Republican candidate for the State Legislature were invited to present the views of their respective parties on issues of concern to Christians. Their presentations were again followed by a lively discussion period. A comment made to Mr. George Turner, the member of St. Stephen's Committee who moderated this meeting, by both politicians is significant: both mentioned that this was the first time that they had been invited to discuss politics in a church!

"In November Mrs. Ruth Weir Miller, Executive Director of the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia, former Educational Director for WCAU and WCAU-TV and president of the University of Pennsylvania Alumnae, addressed the forum on 'A World in Crisis: Challenge to the United Nations' explaining the organization and work of the U.N. This meeting was moderated by Mr. Jay B. Hurst, Jr., a third member of the Committee."

In its initial projects and forums the Committee on Christian social action enjoyed the hearty cooperation of the Churchmen's Brotherhood and the Women's Guild. Further programs planned for 1957 will include race relations, labor relations, juvenile delinquency, and a forum on prison welfare work sponsored by the Churchmen's Brotherhood and supported by the committee. It is also looking into adoption laws and procedures, with the promise of assistance from the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare.

St. Stephen's Church has invited the pastors and members of neighboring churches and synagogues to its forums. Chairman Liddell in turn has been invited to address the men's group in a Presbyterian Church on the subject of Christian Social Action.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY hopes there will be many other churches taking similar steps to "advance" in their witness to their faith.



## Freedom of Communication

Most readers of CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY have been following in the press and in their religious journals the story of the effort by Protestant groups and others interested in free communication to secure a reversal of the decision of the Chicago Tribune's television station WGN-TV cancelling the scheduled showing of the film, *Martin Luther*. Our denomination may take some satisfaction in the fact that Dr. William L. Rest, president of the North Illinois Synod, was a member of the committee which drew up the original protest.

Up to the time of writing, there has been no satisfactory action by the station authorities responsible. The sponsors of the program had approved the showing. Local Roman Catholic authorities, while not approving the film as fare for their own communicants, are reported as offering no objection to its being telecast. In many places the film has been shown without any difficulty. This reduces WGN's defense to rather hollow talk about "controversy" and "emotional reactions." According to reports, a protest is being filed with the Federal Communications Commission which could revoke the station's license.

Ironically, the newspapers have reported more recently that Protestants and Other Americans United for the Separation of Church and State have filed an objection to the granting of broadcasting licenses to two Roman Catholic universities on the ground that through the Jesuit order they are controlled by a foreign power. POAU is, of course, not an official church organization. While it has done some useful things, it has also taken positions which do not reflect responsible Protestant thinking. This new effort at denying a church-related institution the freedom of the air on the grounds stated is no more agreeable because it is directed against a group other than our own. Protestants who have lent their names to this organization should clearly disassociate themselves from this sort of action which can so easily call into question our truly important battles for the freedom of the mind.



## Speaking of Books

With the present effort of conservatives in each party to "out-economize" the other—and to begin the budget-slashing operation at the point of our overseas economic assistance and development programs—we strongly recommend two important recent publications. One is *A Brief Survey of United States Foreign Economic Cooperation since 1945*, written by David Cushman Coyle, and published by the Church Peace Union. This 47 page pamphlet may be purchased for 50 cents from the Commission on Christian Social Action, or secured with much other useful material in our new International Relations Packet for one dollar. It gives concisely and interestingly the history, the cost, the issues, and the present debate.

The other is *A Proposal: Key to an Effective Foreign Policy* written by two Massachusetts Institute of Technology economists, Max F. Millikan and W. W. Rostow, and published by Harpers at \$2.75. This analyzes the purposes, the fallacies, the problems, and the conditions with which we have to reckon. The argument combines tough-minded economic criteria with a broad social understanding that pretty effectively demolishes any notion that we can dispense with foreign aid, have it at a bargain basement figure, or tie it to narrowly conceived military, political, or ideological considerations. At least one reader wishes he could afford to give it to several dozen senators and Congressmen with a guarantee that they would read it!

James Myers, the beloved former industrial relations secretary of the Federal Council of Churches, and Harry W. Laidler, who has given many years to the cause of economic justice and social

progress through the League for Industrial Democracy, have collaborated in writing *What Do You Know About Labor?* (John Day, \$4.75). In one sense this is a revision of the earlier Myers book, *Do You Know Labor?* But so much has happened that much new material has been added in bringing the earlier work up to date, through the AFL-CIO merger. The interest of labor in political action, in education, in international relations, in civil liberty and racial equality has been handled well. A directory of the major labor unions in the country and a bibliography add to the value of the work.

Since we started this column by "plugging" a pamphlet, it may not be amiss to call attention also to a magazine. In the welter of conflicting opinions and accusations regarding the Middle East situation, some of us would like to get a perspective that isn't loaded "pro-Israel" or "pro-Arab" but, if such a thing be possible, attempts objectivity. We are not expert enough to say whether they have succeeded, but the editors of *Social Progress*, monthly publication of the Department of Social Education and Action of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., have made a good attempt in the February issue. You can get it from the SEA Department, 830 Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia 7, Pennsylvania.

And, of course, if you want a briefer statement to go with the recommendations of our own Commission on Christian Social Action, you may secure from our office "A Proposal for Settlement of Certain Middle East Problems through the United Nations," prepared by the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches.

## KEEPING UP WITH THE COMMISSION

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Associate Secretaries Schlegel and Marcus spent over two weeks in Reading Synod, meeting with ministers and groups in local churches. On Saturday, March 16, a synod-wide workshop was held at First Church, Hamburg, Pennsylvania, with consideration of racial integration, Christian citizenship, and the United Nations. On Sunday, March 17, a synodical youth rally gave special attention to inter-faith marriage.

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